

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5955  
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18441

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, CVIS, CASC  
SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF "REPRESENTATION LIST" TO GROMYKO

1. DURING DECEMBER 22 CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO, THE AMBASSADOR PRESENTED GROMYKO WITH REPRESENTATION LIST NUMBER 20, REMINDING HIM THAT SECRETARY VANCE HAD PRESENTED HIM WITH SUCH A LIST LAST MARCH, AND THEN AS NOW WE HAD TAKEN GREAT CARE TO ENSURE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION IN THE LIST. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO TOLD GROMYKO THAT:

---TO DATE ONLY ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF THE FAMILIES ON THE MARCH LIST HAD RECEIVED EXIT VISAS, AND FRANKLY THIS RESPONSE BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WAS DISAPPOINTING TO US, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE COMMITMENT IN THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT REGARDING FACILITATION OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION;

---THE NEW LIST OF COURSE TAKES ACCOUNT OF THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT THE USSR; AS WELL AS 32 NEW FAMILY UNITS, INVOLVING 100 INDIVIDUALS, WHO HAVE COME TO OUR ATTENTION SINCE MARCH.

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2. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE COULD NOT OVER-EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE THAT THE USG, OUR PUBLIC AND OUR CONGRESS ATTACHES TO THE SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF THESE FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROBLEMS, AND HE WOULD ASK GROMYKO TO USE HIS INFLUENCE TO SEE THAT THE CASES WERE PROMPTLY AND SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVED.

3. THE AMBASSADOR ADDED THAT IF THERE WERE REASONS IN A GIVEN CASE FOR NOT ALLOWING DEPARTURE OF PERSONS ON THE LIST, IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN OUR COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE FAMILIES IN THE US AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES OF WE COULD RECEIVE AN EXPLANATION OF THE GROUNDS FOR REFUSAL. THE USG ROUTINELY DID THIS WHEN IT REFUSED A VISA, AND WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE SOVIET SIDE WOULD DO THE SAME.

4. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO HANDED GROMYKO A LIST OF NINE HARDSHIP CASES, NOTING THAT SECRETARY VANCE HAD GIVEN HIM A LIST OF TEN SUCH CASES IN MARCH, OF WHICH UNFORTUNATELY ONLY ONE HAD SENCE BEEN RESOLVED.

THE AMBASSADOR CALLED GROMYKO'S ATTENTION TO THE MCCLELLAN CASE IN PARTICULAR, POINTING OUT THAT MRS. MCCLELLAN HAD NOW WAITED MORE THAN THREE YEARS TO HOIN HER HUSBAND IN THE US, AND THAT THE CASE HAD ATTRACTED EXTENSIVE PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL ATTENTION. ITS RESOLUTION WAS LONG OVERDUE, AND WE WOULD APPRECIATE GROMYKO'S INTERESTING HIMSELF IN IT.

5. GROMYKO RESPONDED IN TYPICAL FASHION THAT HE HAD NO PARTICULAR TASTE FOR THIS SUBJECT, WHICH WAS "TENDENTIOUS" AND INVOLVED SOVIET AFFAIRS AND SOVIET CITIZENS. BUT, HE SAID, "I ACCEPT THE LIST" AND  
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WILL PASS IT ON TO THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES. IN GENERAL, HE ADDED, THOSE WHO WISH TO LEAVE THE USSR COULD DO SO; TENS OF THOUSANDS HAD LEFT IN RECENT YEARS. OF COURSE THERE WERE SOVIET LAWS, AND (IN WHICH SEEMED TO BE AN ALLUSION TO THE MCCLELLAN CASE) WHEN CONSIDERATIONS OF SECURITY WERE INVOLVED THE DECISION SOMETIMES WAS NEGATIVE, EVEN IF SEVERAL YEARS HAD ELAPSED.

6. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE REGRETTEED THAT GROMYKO TOOK THAT ATTITUDE. IN THE AMBASSADOR'S VIEW, AND THAT OF SECRETARY VANCE, THESE CASES REPRESENTED AN UNNECESSARY IRRITANT IN OUR RELATIONSHIP. WE HOPED GROMYKO WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

7. "THAT'S DIFFERENT," SAID GROMYKO, IN SOMETHING OF A NON SEQUITUR: "WE'LL DO WHAT WE CAN." BUT (AS IF DETERMINED TO END THIS PORTION OF THE MEETING ON A STERN NOTE) ARTICLES IN THE US PRESS (ON SUCH CASES) WILL NOT MOVE US AN INCH, HE SAID, "TO THE CONTRARY."

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## Message Attributes

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